

THE MAN FROM OUTER SPACE

During a recent scientific assembly held in the USA, a scientist might have produced photographs and documents offering irrefutable concrete proof of the existence, on our planet, of extra-terrestrial visitors.

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CHAPTER ONE

At the wheel of his cream-colored Kaiser,¹ Dr. Jean Kariven was driving slowly. Next to him the geophysicist Michel Dormoy and in the back seat the ethnographer Robert Angelvin were calmly smoking cigarettes. For eight days the three friends had been enjoying a little *chilling out* by visiting all of California, from north to south and east to west.

"This is a nice change from the Antarctic ice²," Dormoy said, glancing at the yuccas and palm trees that were starting to line the road leading to Los Angeles.

Kariven nodded and smiled at the remark.

Over the course of these past few years, the three explorers had lived through a great many rather extraordinary adventures. Working for the National Center for Scientific Research, their jobs had earned them a well-deserved celebrity.

The "dean" of the team was Kariven, anthropaleontologist, 33 years-old. His athletic build, his black, well-groomed moustache and his virile, handsome appearance made him look strangely like Clark Gable.

In the back seat, with his legs stretched out casually, Angelvin was humming a tune, smoking a cigarette and contemplating the landscape that the early twilight painted cobalt blue. "Are we still far from Los Angeles?" asked, shifting into a more comfortable position to daydream. "You want to take a look at the map, Michel?"

After a minute looking at the unfolded map on his knees Dormoy replied, "We left Desert Center at three o'clock. Box Springs is far behind us. If we speed up we can be there around eight."

The anthropologist leaned heavier on the gas pedal and the Kaiser, smooth and silent, reached 55 miles an hour. Its headlights skimmed the straight road with their bright beams.

Six miles outside of Redlands, Kariven suddenly slowed down. A dark Cadillac was in ditch 200 yards up ahead, tilted to one side. The Kaiser parked close to the crashed luxury car. The three friends rushed over but they reached the rear door they stopped, astounded. Coming from the inside the car a groggy voice was torturing a popular song.

Wearing a gray raincoat and a bright-colored shirt a man was singing, slumped in the front seat. His song was peppered with hiccups. Lying at the feet of the crooner was a flask of scotch, stuck between the brake and gas pedals.

"There truly is a God for drunks!" Dormoy laughed with his mind at ease. "This guy must not have been driving too fast because only the Cadillac's left fender is damaged."

¹ Kaiser Motors (formerly Kaiser-Frazer) Corporation made automobiles at Willow Run, Michigan, United States, from 1945 to 1953. In 1953, Kaiser merged with Willys-Overland to form Willys Motors Incorporated, moving its production operations to the Willys plant at Toledo, Ohio. The company changed its name to Kaiser Jeep Corporation in 1963.

² See *The Forgotten World*, q.v. (Author's Note).

With a beaming smile on his lips the man was snoring like a locomotive now. Kariven pushed him over and sat behind the wheel. In spite of all his efforts the car would not budge.

“Ah! Well, let’s let him sleep it off and we’ll tell the sheriff in Redlands. A ticket won’t hurt this...”

The anthropologist broke off when he heard the sound of footsteps.

A young man, at least six feet tall, was walking down the road toward them. Elegantly dressed in a dark gray suit, with brown, wavy hair but cut short, he stopped in front of the travelers and nodded hello. “Anyone hurt?” he asked in a warm, deep voice with a slight accent that was hard to identify.

“No, luckily. The driver of the Cadillac was drunk, that’s all.”

The stranger leaned through the open window and studied the face of the sleeping drunkard.

“Do you know him?” Angelvin asked.

“No. I don’t know anyone around here.”

“We’re going to tell the Sheriff in Redlands about it. Do you need a ride somewhere?” Kariven offered.

“That’d be great,” the drifter said. “I was hoping to catch a bus in Redlands to go to Los Angeles.”

“We’re going to Los Angeles. Why not come with us?”

Visibly delighted the man accepted and sat in the Kaiser next to Kariven.

When they got to Redlands they stopped the car on Main Street in front of a small, whitewashed building housing the Sheriff and his squad of policemen: five men in all! Kariven had to give his name and address, recount their story and point out in a wall map where the Cadillac had crashed. After all this he got back on the road.

“That drunk made us lose 45 minutes!” Dormoy grumbled.

Kariven drove fast. Without saying anything, he offered a cigarette to his passenger who hesitated to accept.

“Help yourself,” the anthropologist finally said. “You can light it yourself,” and he held out his lighter in one hand without letting go of the wheel with the other.

The man nodded a thank you and examined the lighter, turning it over in his hands. After a few seconds, he managed to get a flame lit, then he handed it back to Kariven who was surprised by the oddity.

The anthropologist watched him out of the corner of his eye. In the light of the flame his calm, energetic face looked curiously tan. Until now the falling darkness had not allowed the Frenchman to see the stranger clearly. In the flickering light, however, dancing over his face, the anthropologist could see the drifter’s bronzed but elegant face.

The cream-colored Kaiser cruised through the suburbs of Pasadena, quickly passed Glendale and crossed the Figueroa bridge over the Los Angeles River before it soon got onto Sunset Boulevard, the famous street in Hollywood that was lined with rich houses behind wonderful, exotic gardens.

The stranger thanked the three travelers and got dropped off at the corner of Figueroa Street so they could continue on to their hotel at 6811 Hollywood Boulevard.

“That guy wasn’t too talkative,” Dormoy commented as they entered the sumptuous lobby of the Hollywood Hotel. “He didn’t open his mouth the entire trip.”

The elevator brought them to the ninth floor where they found their rooms.

“Are you sure you want to go with us tonight, Kariven?” Angelvin asked. “You’re really not interested in the *Mocambo*³?”

Kariven smiled and shook his head. “I’d rather go to the third Flying Saucers Convention⁴ that’s being held downstairs later on. You go to the *Mocambo* and I’ll meet you there when the meeting’s over.”

³ Famous nightclub located on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. (Author’s Note) 8588 sunset Blvd; it opened in 1941 and closed in 1958.

⁴ The first convention was organized by the group Flying Saucers International and took place at the Hollywood Hotel on August 16-18, 1953. (Author’s Note)

“You could just read the report tomorrow morning in the papers,” Angelvin suggested. “Even on vacation you run out on us to investigate this problem of flying saucers.”

The anthropologist laughed. “Oh, I know you two. You’d rather investigate the girls in the nightclubs.”

More than 1,500 people were in the Hollywood Hotel’s convention room. On a stage, sitting behind a long table, six men of different ages were holding the audience breathless by reporting the latest salient facts concerning “unidentified flying objects,” otherwise known as “Flying Saucers.”

Foreign investigators belonging to various research groups were spread out in the first row. Officers from the US Air Force and the ATIC⁵ were listening attentively to one speaker after another. Although they often showed the greatest skepticism, they were no less interested.

In fact, the US Air Force and the ATIC refused to admit officially the extra-terrestrial origin of the mysterious aircraft. Some rumors to the contrary were running through the public but the officials did indeed stay prudently reserved by refusing openly to admit or deny any hypothesis put forward.

The journalists in the front row were eagerly jotting down notes. Some of them had portable video recorders to tape the proceedings. Sometimes a flash would flood the face of famous speaker with a bright light. Because there was no lack of celebrities at this meeting of specialists, notably George Adamski, Fred Scully, Max B. Miller, Orfeo Angelucci, Williamson, George Van Tassel and others⁶.

Wearing a tuxedo because he was going to meet his friends afterward at the *Mocambo*, Kariven had trouble finding a seat in audience that was hanging on the speakers’ every word. The last speaker finished his presentation around 12:30 am. In the middle of the crowd slowly trickling toward the exit Kariven suddenly found himself face to face with the stranger whom he had met a few hours earlier in the deserted road. Just like the anthropologist he was wearing a tuxedo.

An inscrutable smile lit up the tanned man’s face. “How do you do?” he held out his hand to Kariven. Then, looking around at the crowd, he added, “Americans seem to be particularly interested in flying saucers, don’t you think?”

“Americans in particular but the world in general,” Kariven agreed, elbowing through the crowd to stay up with the man. “You’re not American, then...?”

Avoiding the question and probably not wanting to give his name, the stranger sidestepped the question. “In fact, I’m not American. But you’re not either, if I’m not mistaken?”

“I’m French. My name is Jean Kariven, and I’m an anthropaleontologist.”

A surge separated them for a few seconds and when they found each other before the huge Plexiglas doors of the hotel Kariven could not remember if the stranger had introduced himself.

Walking side by side down Hollywood Boulevard they went 100 yards without talking, lost in their thoughts. The tanned man decided to break the silence. “Isn’t there somewhere in Los Angeles where people dress up in crazy clothes and cover their faces with masks?” he asked trying to find the appropriate word.

“Do you mean a costume ball?” Kariven was surprised by the long verbiage for such a banal place.

“Costume ball, that’s it.”

“Certainly. My two friends are at the *Mocambo* right now. It’s a club where there’s a costume night tonight. Let’s go meet them. You’re in a tuxedo like me, which isn’t breaking the rules that require either formal dress or a costume.”

⁵ Air Technical Intelligence Center, an American governmental organization headquartered at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, whose purpose is to investigate all phenomena related to flying saucers. (Author’s Note). The ATIC was created in May 1951, under the direct command of the Air Materiel Control Department. In 1961 ATIC became the Foreign Technology Division (FTD) which was reassigned to Air Force Systems Command (AFSC). In October 1993, FTD became the National Air Intelligence Center as a component of the Air Intelligence Agency, and was recently renamed the National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC) in 2003.

⁶ Famous authors of books about flying saucers and specialists in the study of the phenomena. (Author’s Note) Williamson is George Hunt Williamson.

The big, bright dance floor of the *Mocambo* was crowded with dancers, some in tuxedos, others in costumes. There were the customary dukes and duchess, pierrots and harlequins, Tarzans in leopard skins, “Daughters of the Wild” trying to look like Dorothy Lamour, even some funny lads decked out in hobo rags. In a much more modern and trendy style men and women got up in spacesuits complete with plastic helmets—as we sometimes see in comics and science fiction books—playing astronauts escaping from the authorities... or rather from galactic rocket ships.

But the highlight of the costume party was undoubtedly the three bizarre people—one man and two women—like something straight out of science fiction. The man and his companions had covered their bodies with a green, scaly substance that in the spotlights of the dance floor looked like multicolored jasper but mostly green. They all wore orange jackets decorated with expert embroidery and dotted with sparkling gems. A kind of cap covered their heads and ears with flaps coming down over their cheeks and joined under the chin. A black mask hid the top of their faces. Big gloves went up to their elbows and on their feet they wore riding boots. A red and black bodysuit completed their original, very striking costume. The man was dancing with one of the young women, the other being occupied with a spirited Tarzan.

When Kariven and his untalkative companion crossed the dance floor—not without difficulty—full of waving arms and slithering bodies, something unexpected happened.

As if under a spell, the man and the two women with green skin suddenly stopped dancing. They looked furtively at each other, and then smiling together they started spinning round. The anthropologist’s companion flinched in surprise. His face, however, quickly resumed its usual calm. But the brief change had not gone unnoticed by Kariven.

Before they reached the far end of the dance floor where Dormoy and Angelvin were sitting, the tanned man put his hand on the explorer’s arm. “Excuse me, Mr. Kariven, but I don’t feel like sitting down right away. Would you mind ingesting a beverage with me at the bar of this establishment?”

Kariven stared at him, intrigued by his unusual language, then he accepted. They turned to the right, left the dance floor behind, and went to the bar on the air-conditioned terrace.

“Would you like to sit here?” the stranger pointed to a table off to the side of the almost deserted terrace.

The anthropologist noticed that a huge pillar blocked them from the dance floor. When the waiter brought them their cocktails, Kariven offered a cigarette to his strange companion and gave him a light.

“I still haven’t got used to these little things that you call lighters.”

“That *I call* lighters!” Kariven raised an eyebrow. “What do *you* call these little things?”

The man smiled, was about to answer but said nothing. His smile disappeared, immediately replaced by a weird expression, hard and brutal. His eyes stared at the Plexiglas wall of the air-conditioned terrace.

Kariven looked as well and noticed that the plastic had a mirror effect. They could see the three green-skinned dancers hopping onto the stools at the bar. Their backs were turned to them but the long mirror reflected the image of the table where Kariven and the stranger were sitting. Through the black velvet masks the trio had their six eyes riveted on the reflected image of the tanned-skinned man.

Kariven, slightly taken aback, watched on without understanding. The muscles on the stranger’s face tightened up. He gritted his teeth. His eyes, with dilated pupils, *shined like a mirror under a bright spotlight*. Gradually beads of sweat pearled on his forehead creased in concentration. On the table his clenched fists were turning his knuckles white.

“Are you... are you ill?” Kariven asked worriedly.

The man did not answer.

The anthropologist waited a minute, then put his hand on the other’s arm. Astonished, he pulled back abruptly. By this simple contact *he had just felt a sting like from an electric charge*.

“What’s wrong with you?”

The man stayed mute, his face tense and rigid, his eyes frozen in an expression of dreadful hate.

All of a sudden, at the bar, the sound of broken glass followed by a loud thump made Kariven jump. The three masked dancers, painted green under their orange jackets, were lying motionless at the foot of their stools in a pool of glass from their broken drinks.

Stunned, his mouth hanging open, Kariven wanted to get up and run over but a firm grip held him back. "It's no use, Mr. Kariven. *They're dead...*"

The anthropologist slumped back in his chair and with a trembling hand grabbed his drink. He took a loud, impolite swig and finally managed to blabber, "How do you know that they're... dead?"

Without answering the man stood up. "Let's get out of here, quick!"

"But..." Kariven tried to resist.

Dancers and drinkers were rushing toward the bar. Women screamed, some fainted. Only those who had drunk too much kept singing at their tables, blowing on party favors and clumsily slapping balloons at others unaware of the drama.

"Nobody leaves!" a man in a tuxedo ordered. He stood blocking the door with a Colt 45 in each hand.

Some women screamed again, louder. Other women, preferring to live up to their customary expectations, purposely fainted. A shock wave ran through the crowd of *Mocambo* customers who were upset and offended at being mixed up in God-knows-what scandal. The words "poisoned," "heart attack" and other diagnostics jumped from mouth to mouth. A police siren could be heard, which only aggravated the emotional reactions.

"Come on, Mr. Kariven!" the man dragged him away.

The anthropologist followed, wondering if he might not be incriminating himself by escaping like an accomplice. They dashed around the tables on the deserted terrace and headed for the front door. But before the door was the man in the tuxedo waving his two huge Colts.

"Go back into the room," he barked, pointing with the gun in his right hand.

Undisturbed, Kariven's companion mumbled, "Let me take care of this, Mr. Kariven."

He looked straight into the guard dog's eyes and kept advancing. The menacing tuxedo opened his mouth but did not utter a word. He stepped aside, let the two men pass by and took up his position again, legs apart, ready to push back anyone who got the idea of leaving.

Kariven, more and more astonished, found himself in the garden. The wailing sirens were slowly fading away. The squad cars had stopped in front of the *Mocambo*. Six policemen, guns drawn, were rushing into the nightclub.

Kariven and the stranger crossed the garden, went down a path bordered by sweet-smelling mimosas and magnolias and left unhindered through a door on Loma Vista, a quiet alley.

They walked 100 yards up to Sunset Boulevard where the two men silently climbed into the Kaiser and Kariven started it up. Two police cars sped by them and screeched to a halt in front of the *Mocambo*.

Kariven drove slowly. In the middle of the boulevard a policeman was controlling traffic, yelling out, "Drive on, keep moving..."

The anthropologist was about to do just that when among the customers leaving the nightclub and being put into the squad cars he saw his friends Dormoy and Angelvin. Before he had a chance to call out to the policeman, his companion nudged him with his knee.

Kariven stayed quiet and started gritting his teeth. Then he grumbled, "They're my friends. I can't just sit here and..."

"Yes, of course. But a regular of the *Mocambo* or better yet *a policeman in a tuxedo mingling with the dancers* might recognize us and find it strange that we're driving calmly outside when no one was supposed to leave except to get into those police cars."

"You're a funny guy," Kariven said. "You don't call a lighter a lighter, you say 'ingest a beverage' instead of get a drink and... *you murder people just by looking at them!*"

A smile—cynical or simply amused?—crossed the stranger's lips. "And yet I didn't 'murder' the federal agent who was blocking our way out of the establishment... sorry, the *Mocambo*. I just suggested to him mentally to let us leave."

"So, essentially, you admit to having killed those three harmless dancers?" Kariven slammed on the brakes in front of the South Spring office of the FBI. "Get out!" he ordered, grabbing him roughly by the arm. He let go right away. An unpleasant tingling shook his body from head to toe.

“Don’t be ridiculous, Mr. Kariven, just kept driving until we get around five miles from Upland⁷. I praise your honesty but I assure you that you did nothing wrong by sneaking out of the *Mocambo* with me. I recognize that I look like an... unusual murderer because it was I, in fact, who killed those three... ‘harmless dancers’ as you say. But don’t you also say ‘all’s fair in love and war’?”

Kariven frowned and started driving again, taking Colorado Boulevard to get out of Pasadena⁸. “But we’re not at war!” the anthropologist complained with a shrug. “Whatever you think, I’m now an accomplice of your triple murder since I’m helping you escape.”

The stranger shook his head. “*We* are at war but that’s another story. You, however, Mr. Kariven, are not my accomplice. *You’re going to become my ally...* Touch my arm, my friend. Touch it,” he insisted before his surprised passenger.

Kariven took one hand off the wheel and touched the sleeve of the eerie murderer’s tuxedo. He did not feel the awful tingling that he had felt two times before.

“Well? No reaction?”

“None,” Kariven wondered what this was all about.

“Do it again now.”

“Damn!” the anthropologist cursed as he pulled back his hand.

“Have you ever heard of ‘murderers’ who can kill *simply by concentrating their will*? Who can produce electric currents anywhere from a few volts to over 500 volts and electrocute a human?”

“You... You have this power?” Kariven stuttered.

“*We* have this power and many others besides... which is how I chose you.”

“We’re five or six miles from Upland,” Kariven stopped the Kaiser on the shoulder of the road. Suddenly realizing the significance of the stranger’s declaration the explorer shuddered. “Chose me? Why?”

“Because you bear *the Mark*, Mr. Kariven... I saw it on your hands.”

“But I didn’t... What mark? I don’t remember you examining my hands.”

“I didn’t see it with my eyes *but with my mind*. You put this phenomenon among the extra-sensory perceptions and call it ‘remote viewing’ or ‘supravision,’ right?”

“Hmm... sure,” Kariven agreed. “But what mark are you talking about?”

“Open your hands.”

The anthropologist obeyed and held out his hands, palms upward, in the light of the dashboard.

“There’s the Mark you have, very prominent,” the stranger pointed to *a particular mark formed by a no less particular arrangement of the lines on his hand*. “Don’t think that I’m playing fortune teller. This palm reading pseudo-science—Chiromancy—only makes charlatans rich at the expense of the gullible who believe them. No, Mr. Kariven, this has nothing to do with the trickery of any of those dream peddlers. “You have the Mark. Your friends Dormoy and Angelvin also, as well as a few researchers who were talking tonight at the meeting of people interested in what you call Flying Saucers.”

“OK, I’ve got the Mark,” Kariven gave in, skeptical. “And you deduce what from it?”

“That you belong to the New Race. To the race being born that will gradually supplant the men of the Ancient Era before the Atomic Age here on Earth. Scientists, researchers, artists, writers, engineers and even a few so-called Average Americans and Average Frenchmen... also have the Mark... without even knowing the profound meaning of it. You belong to the Future Race, Mr. Kariven, the race that one day will wipe out the stupidities of this world, overturn the present dogmas, destroy the inanities and injustices of today in order to establish the Golden Age of Civilization that once preceded yours in the long-forgotten past.

“Think about it, Mr. Kariven. Don’t you feel like a stranger in this world, in *your world*? Without sounding like a cliché, don’t you feel like a stranger to the pettiness that poisons existence? Are you satisfied with Life, Society, people and things as they are and not as they should be? Don’t you aspire to

⁷ A town around 25 miles to the east of Los Angeles. (Author’s Note)

⁸ A suburb to the north-east of Downtown Los Angeles. (Author’s Note)

something better, more beautiful, more sublime than the swamp where Humanity is floundering and this in spite of the semblance of evolution and technology it has reached today?”

Kariven looked at his passenger for a long time before responding. “Yes, naturally. You’re saying, in fact, what many others and I have always thought. But even if all men and women bearing the Mark get together, how could they change the world? A social revolution on a planetary scale is not a reform that proceeds inevitably from a common decree. ‘Moral progress’ does not go hand in hand with technical progress, which always precedes it. These asymmetrical progressions—separated by a gulf of trial and error—are, moreover, the cause of slow human evolution. A war advances technology by forcing peoples to search in all fields for a technical way to defeat the enemy. But we can’t want a third world war...”

The bronze-skinned man stared at him and spoke slowly and carefully. “The war has been going on, Mr. Kariven, *for centuries*. You saw a little incidence of it at the *Mocambo*.”

“The three dancers in costumes?”

The man nodded. “That... man and those two women I killed were not dancers. Nor were they men and women... in the sense you would understand it.”

Kariven raised an eyebrow and stammered out, “They... you mean they were... not human?”

“Exactly. What you thought was green paint *was their real skin*. And what you believed to be a costume was nothing other than their usual clothes.”

“What! There exists, on Earth, a parallel humanity whose specimens have that awful, scaly skin like a reptile?”

The stranger shook his head, “Not on Earth, Mr. Kariven. I told you that these beings are not human... *They come from another world!*”